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ABSTRACT

This program, included in "Effective Reading Programs...," serves 61 kindergarten children, the majority of whom are disadvantaged blacks. The all-day kindergarten program is the first phase in the district-wide Continuous Progress Program in Reading. The sequential stages in the development of reading skills are outlined and are presented in behavioral objective form. At the kindergarten level, these objectives are defined generally as mastery in the areas of motor control, communication, listening, visual and auditory discrimination and perception interpretation, word recognition, and linguistic skills. Within each area, specific tasks are identified as being essential to the development of a strong foundation for learning to read. Every effort is made to vary instruction and to teach with materials that the child enjoys and with which he or she experiences success. At each specific level, a mastery test is administered. If a weakness is revealed, the teacher concentrates on remedying the identified problem before the child can begin work on another level. If the same weakness appears on the retest, the child works with an appropriate resource person until the skills are learned. (WR)

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EDEN GARDENS KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

Shreveport, Louisiana

The Eden Garden Kindergarten Program which began in 1970 is staffed by the principal of the school to include two full time kindergarten certified teachers with Master's Degrees, plus additional graduate training; one resource director who assists small groups of children with practice on readiness and reading skills; one program coordinator, who also leads small-group work and does testing; one counselor, who maintains the children's records, counsels with students, and confers with parents; and two full-time aides.

Over half of the students have been identified as Title I students.

This all-day kindergarten program is the first phase in the district-wide Continuous Progress Program in Reading. In a district-prepared bulletin, the sequential stages in the development of reading skills are outlined. These stages are stated in behavioral objective form, rather than in grade-level equivalencies. At the kindergarten level, these objectives are defined generally as mastery in the areas of motor control, communication, listening, visual and auditory discrimination and perceptual interpretation, and cognitive, affective and linguistic skills. Within each area specific tasks are identified as being essential to the development of a strong foundation for learning to read.

The six hour curriculum of this program exposes each child to many experiences, both group and individual, teacher directed and child selected, that help him successfully perform each task. These tasks develop thinking and reasoning skills while expanding knowledge of the child's family, community, and his extended environment. Through small group activities the child develops independent work habits. In working with the teacher and the aide in a small group of

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seven or eight, the child has a greater opportunity to improve language skills and develop a strong self-concept. The teacher is responsible for presenting the auditory, linguistic, and cognitive skills while the aide's primary responsibility is to present visual and motor skills. A rotation of groups allows each child to participate in activities with the teacher twice a day and with the aide twice a day.

The two kindergarten classes are organized around work areas and activity centers, which house many teacher-prepared and commercial materials. Both rooms are equipped with a filmstrip projector, a listening center, tape recorder, record player, and overhead projector.

Activities to build experiences and increase vocabulary are: listening to stories read from a book and told with flannel board characters, using a listening center with a book to accompany the tape, filmstrips, and transparency stories. Finger games, music games, lotto games, puzzles, puppets, and role playing are used also.

Every effort is made to vary instruction and to teach with materials that the child enjoys and with which he experiences success. Some examples of materials and activities are a sign-in chart, which holds a name card for each child, a helper's chart, calendar, and days of the week characters. Manipulative materials include parquetry blocks, peg boards, beads, and colored-inch cubes with design cards and tracing plates. Motor skill developers in the classroom are hopscotch and foot step patterns, block-building and the art center using tempra painting on paper on easels, or colored chalk, crayons, clay, cutting and pasting, and the making of collages from different materials at the art table.

If a weakness is revealed, the teacher concentrates on remedying the identified problem before the child begins work on another level. If the same weakness appears on the retest, the child works with the appropriate resource person until he learns the skill. Careful records are kept for each child which show the date each skill was satisfactorly mastered.

The total cost of consumable instructional materials for a class of thirty is $100. The average annual per-pupil cost for the regular district program is $868. The annual per-pupil cost of this program exceeds that by less than $50. Lunch and breakfast are provided for the children using funds from the federal lunch program.

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